

ʌ\ about ʎ\ kitten, F table ʋ\ further ʌ\ ash ǎ\ ace ǎ\ cot, cart  
 ʌ\ out ʎ\ chin ʎ\ bet ʎ\ easy ʎ\ go ʎ\ hit ʎ\ ice ʎ\ job  
 ʎ\ sing ʎ\ go ʎ\ law ʎ\ boy ʎ\ thin ʎ\ the ʎ\ loot ʎ\ foot  
 ʎ\ yet ʎ\ vision ʎ, k, a, æ, œ, u, ʎ see Guide to Pronunciation

**action** \ˈak-shən\ *n* (14c) 1: a proceeding in a court of justice by which one demands or enforces one's right 2: the bringing about of an alteration by force or through a natural agency 3: the manner or method of performing: a: the deportment of an actor or speaker or his expression by means of attitude, voice, and gesture b: the style of movement of the feet and legs (as of a horse) c: a function of the body or one of its parts 4: an act of will 5 a: a thing done: DEED b: the accomplishment of a thing usu. over a period of time, in stages, or with the possibility of repetition (an ~, the product and expression of exerted force — Thomas Carlyle) c pl: BEHAVIOR, CONDUCT (unscrupulous ~s) d: INITIATIVE, ENTERPRISE (a man of ~) 6 a: (1) an engagement between troops or ships (2) combat in war (gallantry in ~) b: (1) an event or series of events forming a literary composition (2) the unfolding of the events of a drama or work of fiction c: PLOT (3) the movement of incidents in a plot e: the combination of circumstances that constitute the subject matter of a painting or sculpture 7 a: an operating mechanism b: the manner in which a mechanism operates 8 a: the price movement and trading volume of a commodity, security, or market b: the process of betting including the offering and acceptance of a bet and determination of a winner 9: the most vigorous, productive, or exciting activity in a particular field, area, or group (they itch to go where the ~ is — D. J. Henahan)

**action-able** \ˈak-sh(ə)-nə-bəl\ *adj* (1591): subject to or affording ground for an action or suit at law — **action-ably** \-blē\ *adv*

**action-less** \ˈak-shən-ləs\ *adj* (1817): marked by inaction: IMMOBILE

**action painting** *n* (1952): abstract expressionism marked esp. by the use of spontaneous techniques (as dribbling, splattering, or smearing) — **action painter** *n*

**action potential** *n* (1926): a momentary change in electrical potential (as between the inside of a nerve cell and the extracellular medium) that occurs when a cell or tissue has been activated by a stimulus

**act-i-vate** \ˈak-tə-vāt\ *vb* -vat-ed; -vat-ing *vi* (1626): to make active or more active: as a (1) to make (as molecules) reactive or more reactive (2) to convert (as a provitamin) into a biologically active derivative b: to make (a substance) radioactive, luminescent, photosensitive, or photoconductive c: to treat (as carbon or alumina) so as to improve adsorptive properties d: to aerate (sewage) so as to favor the growth of organisms that decompose organic matter e (1) to set up or formally institute (as a military unit) with the necessary personnel and equipment (2) to put (an individual or unit) on active duty ~ *vi*: to become active — **act-i-va-tion** \ˈak-tə-vā-shən\ *n* — **act-i-va-tor** \ˈak-tə-vāt-ər\ *n*

**activated carbon** *n* (1921): a highly adsorbent powdered or granular carbon made usu. by carbonization and chemical activation and used chiefly for purifying by adsorption — called also **activated charcoal**

**activation analysis** *n* (ca. 1949): analysis to determine chemical elements in a material by bombarding it with neutrons to produce radioactive atoms whose radiations are characteristic of the elements present

**activation energy** *n* (1940): the minimum amount of energy required to convert a normal stable molecule into a reactive molecule

**active** \ˈak-tiv\ *adj* [ME, fr. MF or L; MF *actif*, fr. L *activus*, fr. *actus*, pp. of *agere* to drive, do — more at AGENT] (14c) 1: characterized by action rather than by contemplation or speculation 2: productive of action or movement 3 a of a verb form or voice: asserting that the person or thing represented by the grammatical subject performs the action represented by the verb (hits in "he hits the ball" is ~) b: expressing action as distinct from mere existence or state 4: quick in physical movement: LIVELY 5: marked by vigorous activity: BUSY (the stock market was ~) 6: requiring vigorous action or exertion (~ sports) 7: having practical operation or results: EFFECTIVE (an ~ law) 8 a: disposed to action: ENERGETIC (~ interest) b: engaged in an action or activity (an ~ club member) 9: engaged in full-time service esp. in the armed forces (~ duty) 10: marked by present operation, transaction, movement, or use (~ account) 11 a: capable of acting or reacting: ACTIVATED (~ nitrogen) (~ charcoal) b: tending to progress or to cause degeneration (~ tuberculosis) c: exhibiting optical activity d of an electronic element: capable of controlling voltages or currents e: requiring the expenditure of energy (~ calcium ion uptake) 12: still eligible to win the pot in poker 13: moving down the line: visiting in the set — used of couples in contredanses or square dances — **active** *n* — **active-ly** *adv* — **active-ness** *n*

**active immunity** *n* (1911): usu. long-lasting immunity that is acquired through production of antibodies within the organism in response to the presence of antigens — compare **PASSIVE IMMUNITY**

**active transport** *n* (ca. 1963): movement of a chemical substance by the expenditure of energy through a gradient (as across a cell membrane) in concentration or electrical potential and opposite to the direction of normal diffusion

**act-i-ism** \ˈak-ti-viz-əm\ *n* (1915): a doctrine or practice that emphasizes direct vigorous action (as a mass demonstration) in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue — **act-i-ist** \-vəst\ *n* or *adj* — **act-i-ist-ic** \ˈak-ti-viz-ik\ *adj*

**act-i-ity** \ˈak-tiv-ət-ē\ *n*, pl -ties (15c) 1: the quality or state of being active 2: vigorous or energetic action: LIVELINESS 3: natural or normal function: as a: a process (as digestion) that an organism carries on or participates in by virtue of being alive b: a similar process actually or potentially involving mental function; *specif*: an educational procedure designed to stimulate learning by firsthand experience 4: an active force 5 a: a pursuit in which a person is active b: a form of organized, supervised, often extracurricular recreation 6: an organizational unit for performing a specific function; *also*: its function or duties

**act of God** (1859): an extraordinary interruption by a natural cause (as a flood or earthquake) of the usual course of events that experience, prescience, or care cannot reasonably foresee or prevent

**act-to-my-o-sin** \ˈak-tə-mi-ə-sən\ *n* [ISV *actin* + -o- + *myosin*] (1942): a viscous contractile complex of actin and myosin concerned together with ATP in muscular contraction

**actor** \ˈak-tər *also* -tō(ə)r\ *n* (15c) 1: one that acts: DOER 2 a: one who represents a character in a dramatic production b: a theatrical performer c: one that behaves as if acting a part 3: one that takes part in any affair — **ac-tor-ish** \-tə-rish\ *adj*

**act out** *vi* (1611) 1 a: to represent in action (children *act out* what they read) b: to translate into action (unwilling to *act out* their beliefs) 2: to express (as an impulse or a fantasy) directly in overt behavior without modification to comply with social norms

**act-ress** \ˈak-trəs\ *n* (1676): a woman who is an actor

**Acts** \ˈakts\ *n* pl but sing in constr: a book in the New Testament narrating the beginnings of the Christian Church — called also **Acts of the Apostles**; see BIBLE table

**ac-tu-al** \ˈak-ch(ə)-wəl, -sh(ə)-wəl\ *adj* [ME *actuel*, fr. MF, fr. LL *actualis*, fr. L *actus* act] (14c) 1 obs: ACTIVE 2 a: existing in act and not merely potentially b: existing in fact or reality (~ and imagined conditions) c: not false or apparent (~ costs) 3: existing or occurring at the time: CURRENT (caught in the ~ commission of a crime) *n* actual cash value *n* (1946): money equal to the cost of replacing lost, stolen, or damaged property after depreciation

**ac-tu-al-ity** \ˈak-chə-wəl-ət-ē, -ak-shə-wəl\ *n*, pl -ties (1652) 1: the quality or state of being actual 2: something that is actual: FACT, REALITY (possible risks which have been seized upon as *actualities* — T. S. Eliot)

**ac-tu-al-ize** \ˈak-ch(ə)-wə-līz, -sh(ə)-wə-līz\ *vb* -ized; -iz-ing *vi* (1701): to make actual ~ *vi*: to become actual — **ac-tu-al-iza-tion** \ˈak-ch(ə)-wə-lə-zā-shən, -sh(ə)-wə-lə-zā-shən\ *n*

**ac-tu-al-ly** *adv* \ˈak-ch(ə)-wə-lē, -sh(ə)-wə-lē; ˈaks(h)-lē\ (15c) 1: in act or in fact: REALLY (nominally but not ~ independent — Karl Loewenstein) 2: in point of fact: in truth (he ~ spoke Latin)

**ac-tu-ary** \ˈak-chə-wer-ē, -shə-w\ *n*, pl -aries [L *actuarius* shorthand writer, fr. *actum* record — more at ACT] (1553) 1 obs: CLERK, REGISTRAR 2: one who calculates insurance and annuity premiums, reserves, and dividends

**ac-tu-ate** \ˈak-chə-wāt, -shə-w\ *vt* -at-ed; -at-ing [ML *actuatus*, pp. of *actuare*, to execute, fr. L *actus* act] (1645) 1: to put into mechanical action or motion 2: to move to action *syn* see MOVE — **ac-tu-a-tion** \ˈak-chə-wā-shən, -shə-w\ *n*

**ac-tu-a-tor** \ˈak-chə-wāt-ər, -shə-w\ *n* (ca. 1864): one that actuates; *specif*: a mechanism for moving or controlling something indirectly instead of by hand

**act up** *vi* (1903) 1: to act in a way different from that which is normal or expected: as a: to behave in an unruly, recalcitrant, or capricious manner b: SHOW OFF c: to function improperly (this typewriter is *acting up* again) 2: to become active or acute after being quiescent (her rheumatism started to *act up*)

**acu-ity** \ˈkyū-ət-ē, -ə\ *n*, pl -ities [MF *acuité*, fr. OF *agüeté*, fr. *agu* sharp, fr. L *acutus*] (1543): keenness of perception: SHARPNESS

**acu-le-ate** \ˈkyū-lē-ət\ *adj* [L *aculeatus* having stings, fr. *aculeus*, dim. of *acus*] (1661): having a sting (~ insects)

**acu-men** \ˈkyū-mən, -ak-yə-mən\ *n* [L *acumin*, *acumen*, lit., point, fr. *acuere*] (1531): keenness and depth of perception, discernment, or discrimination esp. in practical matters: SHREWDNESS *syn* see DIS-CERNMENT

**acu-mi-nate** \ˈkyū-mə-nət\ *adj* (1646): tapering to a slender point

**acu-pres-sure** \ˈak-(y)ə-presh-ər\ *n* (1859): SHIATSU

**acu-punc-ture** \ˈpən(k)-chər\ *n* [L *acus* + E *puncture*] (ca. 1860): an orig. Chinese practice of puncturing the body (as with needles) at specific points to cure disease or relieve pain (as in surgery) — **acu-punc-tur-ist** \ˈpən(k)-chə-rəst\ *n*

**acute** \ˈkyūt\ *adj* *acute-er*; *acute-est* [L *acutus*, pp. of *acuere* to sharpen, fr. *acus* needle; akin to L *acer* sharp — more at EDGE] (14c) 1 a (1) characterized by sharpness or severity (~ pain) (an ~ infection) (2) having a sudden onset, sharp rise, and short course (~ disease) b: lasting a short time (~ experiments) 2: ending in a sharp point: as a: being or forming an angle measuring less than 90 degrees (~ angle) b: composed of acute angles (~ triangle) 3 a: marked by keen discernment or intellectual perception esp. of subtle distinctions: PENETRATING (an ~ thinker) b: responsive to slight impressions or stimuli (~ observer) 4: felt, perceived, or experienced intensely (~ distress) 5: seriously demanding urgent attention (an ~ housing shortage) 6 a of an accent mark: having the form b: marked with an acute accent c: of the variety indicated by an acute accent — **acute-ly** *adv* — **acute-ness** *n*

*syn* ACUTE, CRITICAL, CRUCIAL mean of uncertain outcome. ACUTE stresses intensification of conditions leading to a culmination or breaking point; CRITICAL adds to ACUTE implications of imminent change, of attendant suspense, and of decisiveness in the outcome; CRUCIAL suggests a dividing of the ways and often a test or trial involving the determination of a future course or direction. *syn* see in addition SHARP

**acy-clic** \ˈä-si-klik, -sik-lik\ *adj* (1878) 1: not cyclic; esp: not disposed in cycles or whorls 2: having an open-chain structure; esp: ALIPHATIC (an ~ compound)

**ac-yl** \ˈas-əl\ *n* [ISV, fr. *acid*] (1901): a radical derived usu. from an organic acid by removal of the hydroxyl from all acid groups

**ad** \ˈad\ *n*, often attrib (1841) 1: ADVERTISEMENT 2: ADVERTISING

**ad** *n* (1947): ADVANTAGE 4

**ad-** or **ac-** or **af-** or **ag-** or **al-** or **ap-** or **as-** or **at-** prefix [ME, fr. MF, OF & L; MF, fr. OF, fr. L, *ad* — more at AT] 1: to: toward — usu. *ac-* before *c*, *k*, or *q* (*ac-culturation*) and *af-* before *f* and *ag-* before *g* (*ag-grade*) and *al-* before *l* (*al-literation*) and *ap-* before *p* (*ap-proximal*) and *as-* before *s* (*assuasive*) and *at-* before *t* (*attune*) and *ad-* before other sounds but sometimes *ad-* even before one of the listed consonants (*adsorb*) 2: near: adjacent to — in this sense always in the form *ad-* (*adrenal*)

**-ad** \ˈad, əd\ *adv* suffix [L *ad*]: in the direction of: toward (cephalad)

**ad-age** \ˈad-ij\ *n* [MF, fr. L *adagium*, fr. *ad-* + *agium* (akin to *agio* say)] (1548): a saying often in metaphorical form that embodies a common observation

**ada-gio** \ə-ˈdāj-(ē), -däz-\ *adv* or *adj* [It, fr. *ad* to + *agio* ease, fr. LL *adagium* near at hand — more at EASE] (1724): in an easy graceful manner: SLOWLY — used chiefly as a direction in music

**adagio** *n*, pl -gios (1754) 1: a musical composition or movement in adagio tempo 2: a ballet duet by a man and woman or a mixed trio displaying difficult feats of balance, lifting, or spinning

**Ad-am** \ˈad-əm\ *n* [ME, fr. man and father by Eve of of man — used esp. in the or Adam-ical \-i-kəl\ *adj*

**Adam** *adj* [Robert Adam & 18th century decorative styles, surface decoration, a lands and medallions]

**ad-a-mance** \ˈad-ə-mən(t)s\ *n*

**ad-a-man-cy** \-mən-sē\ *n* [2a]

**adam-and-eve** \ˈad-ə-mən-ə\ *n*

**ad-a-mant** \ˈad-ə-mənt, -mə\ *n*

hardest metal, diamond, fr. merly believed to be of im extremely hard substance

**adamant** *adj* (1535): unsl

UNYIELDING *syn* see INFL

**ad-a-man-tine** \ˈad-ə-mən-tī\ *n*

fr. Gk *adamantinos*, f having the quality of adam

sembling the diamond in ha

Adam's apple *n* (ca. 1775)

formed by the largest cartila

Adam's needle *n* (1791): any

**adapt** \ˈdapt, ə- vb [F or I to fit, fr. *aptus* apt, fit] *vi* (15 or situation) often by modifi

ed-ness *n*

*syn* ADAPT, ADJUST, ACCOM one thing into correspond

cation according to changi

to the warmer climate) ADJ

correspondence or harmon

ism (adjusted the budget

suggest yielding or compre

(accommodated his politics

to bringing into harmony

principle (refused to confor

RECONCILE implies the dem

congruity of things that se

what they said with what I

**adapt-able** \ˈdapt-ə-bəl, ə-*n*

SUITABLE *syn* see PLASTIC

**ad-ap-ta-tion** \ˈad-ap-tā-shən\ *n*

adapting: the state of being

tal conditions: as a: adjus

quality of stimulation b:

that makes it more fit for ex

ment 3: something that is

into a new form — **ad-ap-te**

**tion-ally** \-ē\ *adv*

**adap-ter** *also* **adap-tor** \ˈdap-*a*

a: a device for connecting

apparatus b: an attachmer

intended

**adap-tion** \ˈdapt-shən, ə-*n*

**adap-tive** \ˈdapt-iv, ə-*adj*

or tendency toward adaptati

— **ad-ap-tiv-ity** \ˈad-ap-tiv-*it*

**adaptive radiation** *n* (1902):

ized ancestral form with pro

ized forms

**Adar** \ˈä-där, -ä-*n* [ME, fr. civil year or the 12th mont]

calendar — see MONTH table

**Adar She-ni** \ä-där-shä-nē\ *n*

(1901): VEADAR

**ad-ax-i-al** \ˈä-dak-sē-əl\ *adj*

facing the axis (as of an organ

**add** \ˈad\ *vb* [ME *adden*, fr. L *do*] *vi* (14c) 1: to join or

improvement (~s 60 acres

cooking) 2: to say further

an equivalent simple quant

of a group (don't forget to ~

b: to come together or uniti

tion (the movie will ~ to his

her savings) — **add-able** or **ad**

**ad-dax** \ˈad-aks\ *n*, pl **ad-dax**

**lope** (Addax nasomaculata) of

**ad-dend** \ˈad-ənd, ə-ˈdend\ *n*

ber to be added to another

**ad-den-dum** \ˈad-dən-dəm\ *n*, pl

gerundive of *addere*] (1684)

plement to a book — often us

**ad-der** \ˈad-ər\ *n* [ME, alter. *dre*, fr. OE *nædre*; akin to O

(bef. 12c) 1: the common

broadly: a terrestrial viper

American snakes (as the ho

popularly believed to be veno

**adder** \ˈad-ər\ *n* (1580): on

puter) that performs addition

**ad-der's-tongue** \ˈad-ər-z-təŋ\ *n*

family Ophioglossaceae) wh

tongue 2: DOGTUOTH VIOLET

**ad-dict** \ˈdikt\ *vi* [L *addictus* to say — more at DICTION] (1: to something habitually or

cause to become physiological

**ad-dict** \ˈad-(i)kt\ *n* (1909)

DEVOTEE (a detective novel ~